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Immediate Release

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Environment Department to Tackle Environmental Justice Issues in Albuquerque

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) will hold an Environmental Justice listening session in Albuquerque on Thursday and Friday, September 16 and 17, 2004. This session is part of a statewide plan to study and address the issue of environmental justice. By tackling this issue, NMED hopes to ensure that no population in New Mexico is exposed to a disproportionate amount of the negative human health and environmental impacts of pollution or other environmental hazards.

This session will be held on **Thursday, September 16, 2004 from 10 am to 8 pm and Friday, September 17, 2004 from 9 am to 3:30 pm at the Albuquerque Hilton Hotel, 1901 University Boulevard NE.**

The first day will include panel discussions on the history of environmental justice, landfills, uranium, Los Alamos and open public comment. The second day will include a roundtable discussion on community involvement in environmental justice issues as well as further public feedback. Invited panelists include Representative John Heaton, Doug Mickeljohn of the New Mexico Environmental Law Center, Regina Romero, New Mexico Municipal League and Richard Moore of the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice.

“It goes without saying that all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, income, or education level, should be treated fairly,” said NMED Deputy Secretary Derrith Watchman-Moore. “By investigating and addressing the issue of environmental justice, NMED hopes to ensure that no community is forced to shoulder a disproportionate burden of pollution or environmental harm.”

Representatives from NMED, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and other local or Tribal governments will be in attendance to personally hear concerns. Any person or organization that wishes to provide oral comments will be given five minutes to present their environmental justice concerns. Written statements can also be submitted during the session or by mail. Please send all comments to: EJ Listening Session Workgroup, 801 University Boulevard SE, Suite 302, Albuquerque, NM, 87106. These recommendations will be used to formulate community-based policies and planning initiatives.

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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